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WILLIAM COWPER AND LADY AUSTEN.

AN IMAGINARY DIALOGUE.

Lady Austen. Nay, have pity on your lungs, Mr Cowper. You will provoke them to rebellion, or weary them into exhaustion, by so much reading aloud. Shut up George Herbert, and improvise a little verse or chatty prose of your own.

William Cowper. Such pity on my vocal organs as your tenderness invokes would be but obtained at the expense of my entire comfort. Body, soul, and spirit would all suffer while those puffing and blowing agitators, the lungs, were enjoying a needless respite. To read George Herbert aloud—if to you it be not grievous, is safe to me; for it partly merges my gloomy self in his saintly thoughts, and delays that return of full consciousness which shows me how weak and useless I am. But perhaps I have really tired you with my favourite minstrel. If so, we shall insure recreation by exchanging him for another of the brotherhood of bards; or better still, go you to the harpsichord, Sister Anne, and discourse most eloquent music. The poor instrument is out of tune, I allow. But how much more so am I! You can at least coax it into runs and variations; it will answer you with sprightly *allegro* as well as pensive *adagio*. But I contribute one key only—the minor; and even in that you must catch accidental flats that have no business there.

L. A. To the harpsichord anon, Mr Cowper. We have not done with reading and talking yet. I have every respect for the 'divine Herbert,' especially as read by a living poet; so do not suppose my interruption was the cry of weariness. But I might appreciate him better were you to enliven his text with occasional comments and criticisms of your own.

C. Ask it not! My truest comment would be that personal dejection which the heart only, the lips never, can express. I love Herbert, because his verses are so unfeignedly those of a man acquainted with sorrow—a man who has not merely hailed sorrow as she passed by his porch, but who has received her into his house, and intreated her as his guest, and conversed with her at morning, and noon, and the night season.

L. A. All which may possibly make him an unfit companion to your own mornings, noons, and nights; for such I believe he not unfrequently is.

C. There are times, dear Anna, when this is the case; and at such times, to remove him from me, and to forbid my perusing him, would be one of the cruellest of cruel kindnesses. My own melancholy is far deeper than his; and in his expression of dejected feelings and their consequences I find a sympathy which soothes me into positive gratitude and comparative peace.

L. A. Critically speaking, do you not consider him an abrupt and rugged writer—so quaint as to be obscure, and not quite free from the semblance of affectation?

C. Like the majority of his contemporaries, he indulged in fancies and conceits, from all taste for which we are separated, not only by a century and a-half of years, but also by the revolutionary standard set up by the Pope school, and more recently by Dr Johnson and his imitators. A reader of the present day, accustomed to the French polish of the 'Rape of the Lock,' and to the severe stateliness of 'Irene,' or of 'London: a Poem,' is naturally apt to stumble at the uneven ground trodden by Elizabethan and succeeding poets. The latter are quite in the shade of neglect at present; but so full are they of vital strength and luxuriant beauty, that it requires no prophet, nor son of a prophet, to predict their restoration before long to the warmth and daylight of public interest.

L. A. I fancy the obscurities and conceits of Herbert will delay his share in the fulfilment of your prophecy to a very late stage of the *anende honorable*.

C. His audience is always likely to be of the 'fit though few' kind. But with them he must be an especial darling. Nor can any heart open to emotion at all resist the sweetness which his stanzas so profusely exhale. Look at the verse I was reading when you stopped me:—

'At first thou gavest me milk and sweetnooses;
I had my wish and way:
My days were strewed with flowers and happiness;
There was no month but May:
But with my years sorrow did twist and grow,
And made a party unawares for wo.'

If you are more offended by the rhythm, and rhyme, and curious diction of such lines, than charmed by their hearty freshness, you are a more capacious critic than I care to encounter or hope to convert.

L. A. Pray go on: I shall learn to delight in Herbert when once his beauties are fairly illustrated by the lectures of such a professor of poetry. I am all attention.

C. And yet were so mistrustful of the professor's lungs five minutes since! Like a true mistress of the art of manœuvre (in its most amiable phase, I allow), you have already flattered me into the commission of some extempore prose, and are now intent on involving me deeper and deeper still. But my *amour propre* having been gratified in your mode, now claims its own method of indulgence. I must be wilful and peremptory, therefore, even with Lady Austen. Shall I read Milton, or will you play on the harpsichord?

L. A. I love to see you peremptory; it excites you,

and then your blood runs more freely, and your eye laughs with meaning. Only call me not Lady Austen—that reminds me of your awful reserve and magnificent politeness when we first became acquainted.

C. A day to be marked with a white stone in my experience. Yet it is humiliating to remember, that after I had seen you from the window, and urged Mary to invite you to tea, so appalled was I at your arrival, so apprehensive at meeting a stranger, that it required the united appeals of our household to induce me to face you. Things soon altered for the better. I call you Sister Anne now.

L. A. *Mille remerciements!* Yes, Mr Cowper; and you have immortalised me—have you not?—in certain lines, commencing 'Dear Anna,' in which you speak of your original diffidence—

'A transient visit intervening,
And made almost without a meaning,
Hardly the effect of inclination,
Much less of pleasing expectation.'

Not very obscure that, sir; which transient visit, however,

'Produced a friendship, then begun,
That has cemented us in one.'

C. A friendship that has been, and is, one of the choicest blessings of a life sadly in need of them. Be yours the blessing promised to such as comfort those who mourn! I cannot recompense you; but you shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

L. A. Mr Cowper, shall I turn to the harpsichord now? C. Stay. Let me cherish for a moment the bright vision revealed by your friendship to dark and dreary hours. The heart knoweth its own bitterness—but for once a stranger *did* intermeddle therewith; a stranger who cast salt into that fountain of Marah, and stilled the agitation of its waters, till they became like the waters of Siloam that go softly. Anna, Anna! if you could but fathom my wo (thank God you cannot, pray God you never may!), you would see into the value of every opiate, every balm, every solace to its strange anguish. If—

L. A. Come, listen! Music hath charms to—

C. If you could pierce the darkness that may be felt—(ah, was there any plague in Egypt like that plague?)—you would learn the worth I attach to every streak of light. They whose lot is the waste howling wilderness learn to prize the pillar of cloud by day, and of fire when the sun is set. Only affliction catches the true meaning and melody of songs in the night. But there is something oppressive in that meaning, something awful in that melody.

L. A. *Allons!* I am impatient to exhibit my harpsichord powers. Shall it be Handel, or Haydn, or our own Purcell? or are you curious to hear the air that last electrified Ranelagh?

C. Sister Anne, I feel for the moment averse to music, even Handel's—to *badinage*, even yours. I am not in the vein.

L. A. Wherefore I must scold you into it. When you are least disposed for recreation, then is recreation the thing for you. One of your noble society of poets, Mr Cowper, has said—

'Sweet recreation barred, what doth ensue
But moody and dull melancholy,
(Kinsman to grim and comfortless despair);
And at her heels a huge infectious troop
Of pale distemperatures, and foes to life!'

This is true doctrine, sir, though taken from the 'Comedy of Errors!'

C. The same poet has put on record words which too accurately express my own occasional feelings—

'There's nothing in this world can make me joy:
Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale,
Vexing the dull ear of a drowsy man.'

L. A. You are determined, then, to return bitter for my sweet, and dark for my light, and frown for smile, and sigh for simper. These things ought not so to be. A little more of this perverseness on Mr Cowper's part, and I must lecture him, in good set terms, till he shrinks from Sister Anne as one of the Eumenides. I shall treat him to a dose of his own 'Truth,' and 'Expostulation,' and—

C. Be merciful! He is also implicated in the 'Progress of Error.'

L. A. An erring brother, who may yet be reclaimed by judicious administration of 'Table-Talk.' What do you say to a season with us in yonder huge, overgrown, sprightly metropolis?

C. What do you say, Anabella, to a course of probation in Dante's *Purgatorio*?

L. A. If it were brief, and insured my fitness for the *Paradiso*, I might at least give it a second thought.

C. I should, it seems, have named the *Inferno* instead. L. A. And retracted it in the same breath, I hope. Even for your poetic authority, such a poetic license were too bad. Could you not set foot in London without dragging in the mud of its streets? Could you not see life without gazing on vice? I do not ask you to play at Brookers', nor even to see Miss Young in Hannah More's last tragedy—nor to be wedged in among the hoops at Ranelagh, listening to the strains, and lisping the praises, of Mr Shield and Mr Hook—nor to split with admiring laughter at Miss Pope's Tilburina on the boards of Old Drury—nor to lounge with Dr Johnson in the green-room amid a bevy of Mrs Clives. Let me prescribe for you a more moderate system—a gentle course of tonics. I will pledge my unprofessional reputation on bracing you up, and on making heaven brighter, as well as earth dearer, to you by the change.

C. I need scarcely undertake a journey to London for the sake of recreation. If I cannot secure its blessing from the nature of God's making, how shall I from the artificiality of man's?

L. A. Have you no faith in my remedies?

C. Canst thou administer to a mind diseased?

L. A. If yours be one—yes. Have I not worried you again and again into levity unbecoming a grave didactic poet? Did I not convert you once from a brooding misanthropic Timon of Olney into a chuckling Mercutio, by that story of John Gilpin, which you forthwith turned into merry verse? Your shouts of laughter yet ring in my ears. You *can* laugh with the merriest, if not with the loudest and longest; and never, I believe, are the thoughts of your heart more innocent than then.

C. I am not naturally an austere man, nor do the lines in my forehead naturally settle into a frown. My convulsions produced by your Gilpin were involuntary and inevitable; and however their extravagance might offend some worthy people, I do not even now (depressed as I am) feel that there was much to be ashamed of in those violent peals.

L. A. I only wish I had another John Gilpin in my repository of traditions to stir you up to another explosion.

C. You cost me a night's rest on that occasion; for sleep was mocked into flight by recurring fits of laughter; and I came down to breakfast with a ready-made poem on the woes of the worthy wight. I fancy Luther would have laughed without restraint at a poorer joke than this—and he was a good man, one of the first in the kingdom of Heaven.

L. A. I wish you would set to and indite another ballad in the same key. I will try and find you a subject.

C. You must also find me the spirits.

L. A. What poem engages you at present?

C. None. My strength is to sit still.

L. A. Why not, for novelty's sake, try your Pegasus on the broad slopes of blank verse?

C. Because he would run away with his rider. My Pegasus will only amble along the narrow roads hedged in by rhyme. The bells and jingling of rhyme are part of his harness, and so used is he to the tinkle, that in missing it he would miss his footing too.

L. A. I doubt that. He might stumble once, but would soon recover himself, and spurning the harness and the confined thoroughfare, would bound into the freedom and exult in the variety of a new career.

C. Blank verse demands, whatever may be thought to the contrary, more toil and energy than rhyme, and involves infinitely greater difficulty and fatigue. A man had need be healthy in body as well as mind who proposes to adopt it—for to sustain it successfully imposes a heavy tax upon both.

L. A. Do you speak from experience? If so, unlock your desk, Mr Cowper, and read—read—read!

C. Sister Anne, you know all that my desk contains. It is as empty as my brain of blank verse.

L. A. I insist upon it that such vacancy is discreditable both to the wooden desk and—

C. The wooden head.

L. A. Against which I mean to rap for blank verse till I am answered. Occupation and recreation are both eligible acquaintance for Mr Cowper; and I am persuaded that he may cultivate the good offices of both by composing a poem *not* in rhyme. His success in rhymes is *un fait accompli*. I will guarantee an equal triumph in blank verse.

C. You are a daring speculator, Anna. And pray what subject will insure this glorious victory?

L. A. With you, any subject.

C. What illimitable genius is Mr Cowper's of Olney! Homer might have failed had his epic treated of the afternoon nap and domestic habits of old Priam—not so Mr Cowper: Milton might have been tedious had he composed ten books on the manufacture of Adam's original vestments—but such tedium were impossible in Mr Cowper: Thomson might have provoked a yawn had his 'Summer Season' been confined to an exposition of colic and the sorrows of eating unripe pears—but Mr Cowper would render it fascinating to the boudoir as well as to the medical gazettes. Do you mean all this?

L. A. Divide the sum of your exaggeration by a fraction of common sense, and the quotient will give my meaning. Come—promise to set about the task I propose.

C. Will your importunate ladyship name the subject in particular as well as the task in general? Give me a theme.

L. A. Ah! you relent. But don't quibble about a subject; you can write about anything. This sofa, for instance.

C. Heroic indeed! The 'Iliad' opens with

'Achilles' wrath, to Greece the direful spring
Of woes unnumbered.'

the 'Æneid' with 'Arms and the Man' who begat the glorious Latins: the 'Paradise Lost' with

'Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe.'

My epic must commence with the startling announcement: 'I sing the Sofa,' or some equivalent sublimity.

L. A. You agree to undertake the task?

C. How were it possible longer to resist the importunities of the fair? Show me, and I would resist. Agreed, then—the Sofa shall be my Task, nor will I forget to celebrate the evening when that task was imposed: the sights and sounds of which we are conscious as we sit on this sofa, shall be introduced, that Sister Anne's share in the project may be kept in remembrance. That twanging horn of the postman now crossing the bridge, with his budget of news good and

bad—the pleasant look of those closed shutters and drawn curtains—the crackling of the fire—the hissing of that garrulous urn—the clatter of those tea-cups—all shall find room. If I may sing a sofa into epic dignity, why not the Tea-table also?

L. A. Ay, and introduce Dr Johnson at his thirteenth cup, an' it please you. Mind you begin to-morrow morning in good earnest!

'THE WIFE'S STRATAGEM.'

CAPTAIN MARMADUKE SMITH, whom I have had the honour of once or twice before introducing to the readers of the Journal, is—judging from his present mundane, matter-of-fact character—about the last man one would suspect of having been at any time of his life a victim to the 'tender passion.' A revelation he volunteered to two or three cronies at the club the other evening undeceived us. The captain on this occasion, as was generally the case on the morrow of a too great indulgence, was somewhat dull-spirited and lachrymose. The weather, too, was gloomy; a melancholy barrel-organ had been droning dreadfully for some time beneath the windows; and, to crown all, Mr Tape, who has a quick eye for the sentimental, had discovered, and read aloud, a common, but sad story of madness and suicide in the evening paper. It is not, therefore, so surprising that tender recollections should have revived with unusual force in the veteran's memory.

'You would hardly believe it, Tape,' said Captain Smith, after a dull pause, and emitting a sound somewhat resembling a sigh, as he relighted the cigar which had gone out during Mr Tape's reading—'you would hardly believe it perhaps; but I was woman-witched once myself!'

'Never!' exclaimed the astonished gentleman whom he addressed. 'A man of your strength of mind, captain? I can't believe it: it's impossible!'

'It's an extraordinary fact, I admit; and, to own the truth, I have never been able to account exactly for it myself. Fortunately, I took the disorder as I did the measles—youth; and neither of these complaints is apt to be so fatal then, I'm told, as when they pick a man up later in life. It was, however, a very severe attack while it lasted. A very charming hand at hooking a gudgeon was that delightful Coralie Dufour, I must say.'

'Any relation to the Monsieur and Madame Dufour we saw some years ago in Paris?' asked Tape. 'The husband, I remember, was remarkably fond of expressing his gratitude to you for having once wonderfully carried him through his difficulties.'

Captain Smith looked sharply at Mr Tape, as if he suspected some lurking irony beneath the bland innocence of his words. Perceiving, as usual, nothing in the speaker's countenance, Mr Smith—blowing at the same time a tremendous cloud to conceal a faint blush which, to my extreme astonishment, I observed stealing over his unaccustomed features—said gravely, almost solemnly: 'You, Mr Tape, are a married man, and the father of a family, and your own experiences therefore in the female line must be ample for a lifetime; but you, sir,' continued the captain patronisingly, addressing another of his auditors, 'are, I believe, as yet "unattached," in a legal sense, and may therefore derive profit as well as instruction from an example of the way in which ardent and inexperienced youth is sometimes entrapped and bamboozled by womankind. Mr Tape, oblige me by touching the bell.'

The instant the captain's order had been obeyed, he commenced the narrative of his love adventure, and for a time spoke with his accustomed calmness; but towards the close he became so exceedingly discursive and excited, and it was with so much difficulty we drew from him many little particulars it was essential to

hear, that I have been compelled, from regard to brevity as well as strict decorum, to soften down and render in my own words some of the chief incidents of his mishap.

Just previous to the winter campaign which witnessed the second siege and fall of Badajoz, Mr Smith, in the zealous exercise of his perilous vocation, entered that city in his usual disguise of a Spanish countryman, with strict orders to keep his eyes and ears wide open, and to report as speedily as possible upon various military details which it was desirable the British general should be made acquainted with. Mr Smith, from the first moment the pleasant proposition was hinted to him, had manifested considerable reluctance to undertake the task; more especially as General Phillipon, who commanded the French garrison, had not very long before been much too near catching him, to render a possibly still more intimate acquaintance with so sharp a practitioner at all desirable. Nevertheless, as the service was urgent, and no one, it was agreed, so competent as himself to the duty—indeed upon this point Mr Smith remarked that the most flattering unanimity of opinion was exhibited by all the gentlemen likely, should he decline the honour, to be selected in his place—he finally consented, and in due time found himself fairly within the walls of the devoted city. 'It was an uncomfortable business,' the captain said—'very much so—and in more ways than one. It took a long time to accomplish; and what was worse than all, rations were miserably short. The French garrison were living upon salted horse-flesh, and you may guess, therefore, at the condition of the civilians' victualling department. Wine was, however, to be had in sufficient plenty; and I used frequently to pass a few hours at a place of entertainment kept by an Andalusian woman, whose bitter hatred of the French invaders, and favourable disposition towards the British, were well known to me, though successfully concealed from Napoleon's soldiers, many of whom—sous-officiers chiefly—were her customers. My chief amusement there was playing at dominoes for a few glasses. I played when I had a choice with a smart, goodish-looking sous-lieutenant of voltigeurs—a glib-tongued chap, of the sort that tell all they know, and something over, with very little pressing. His comrades addressed him as Victor, the only name I then knew him by. He and I became very good friends, the more readily that I was content he should generally win. I soon reckoned Master Victor up; but there was an old, wiry *gredin* of a sergeant-major sometimes present, whose suspicious manner caused me frequent twinges. One day especially I caught him looking at me in a way that sent the blood galloping through my veins like wildfire. A look, Mr Tape, which may be very likely followed in a few minutes afterwards by a halter, or by half-a-dozen bullets through one's body, is apt to excite an unpleasant sensation.'

'I should think so. I wouldn't be in such a predicament for the creation!'

'It's a situation that would hardly suit you, Mr Tape,' replied the veteran with a grim smile. 'Well, the gray-headed old fox followed up his look with a number of interesting queries concerning my birth, parentage, and present occupation, my answers to which so operated upon him, that I felt quite certain when he shook hands with me, and expressed himself perfectly satisfied, and sauntered carelessly out of the place, that he was gone to report his surmises, and would be probably back again in two twos with a file of soldiers and an order for my arrest. He had put me so smartly through my facings, that although it was quite a cold day for Spain, I give you my honour I perspired to the very tips of my fingers and toes. The chance of escape was, I felt, almost desperate. The previous evening a rumour had circulated that the British general had stormed Ciudad-Rodrigo, and might therefore be already hastening in

his seven-league boots towards Badajoz. The French were consequently more than ever on the alert, and keen eyes watched with sharpened eagerness for indications of sympathy or correspondence between the citizens and the advancing army. I jumped up as soon as the sergeant-major had disappeared, and was about to follow, when the mistress of the place approached, and said hastily, 'I have heard all, and if not quick, you will be sacrificed by those French dogs: this way.' I followed to an inner apartment, where she drew from a well-concealed recess a French officer's uniform, complete. "On with it!" she exclaimed as she left the room. "I know the word and countersign." I did not require twice telling, you may be sure; and in less than no time was toggled off beautifully in a lieutenant's uniform, and walking at a smart pace towards one of the gates. I was within twenty yards of the corps-de-garde, when whom should I run against but Sous-Lieutenant Victor! He stared, but either did not for the moment recognise me, or else doubted the evidence of his own senses. I quickened my steps—the guard challenged—I gave the words, "Napoleon, Austerlitz!"—passed on; and as soon as a turn of the road hid me from view, increased my pace to a run. My horse, I should have stated, had been left in sure hands at about two miles' distance. Could I reach so far, there was, I felt, a chance. Unfortunately, I had not gone more than five or six hundred yards, when a hubbub of shouts, and musket-shots, in my rear announced that I was pursued. I glanced round; and I assure you, gentlemen, I have seen in my life many pleasanter prospects than met my view—Richmond Hill, for instance, on a fine summer day. Between twenty and thirty voltigeurs, headed by my friend Victor, who had armed himself, like the others, with a musket, were in full pursuit; and once, I was quite satisfied, within gun-shot, my business would be very effectually and speedily settled.

'I ran on with eager desperation; and though gradually neared by my friends, gained the hut where I had left the horse in safety. The voltigeurs were thrown out for a few minutes. They knew, however, that I had not passed the thickish clumps of trees which partially concealed the cottage; and they extended themselves in a semicircle to enclose, and thus make sure of their prey. Juan Sanchez, luckily for himself, was not at home; but my horse, as I have stated, was safe, and in prime condition for a race. I saddled, bridled, and brought him out, still concealed by the trees and hut from the French, whose exulting shouts, as they gradually closed upon the spot, grew momentarily louder and fiercer. The sole desperate chance left was to dash right through them; and I don't mind telling you, gentlemen, that I was confoundedly frightened, and that but for the certainty of being instantly sacrificed without benefit of clergy, I should have surrendered at once. There was, however, no time for shilly-shallying. I took another pull at the saddle-girths, mounted, drove the only spur I had time to strap on sharply into the animal's flank, and in an instant broke cover in full and near view of the expecting and impatient voltigeurs; and a very brilliant reception they gave me—quite a stunner in fact! It's a very grand thing, no doubt, to be the exclusive object of attention to twenty or thirty gallant men, but so little selfish, gentlemen, have I been from my youth upwards in the article of "glory," that I assure you I should have been remarkably well pleased to have had a few companions—the more the merrier—to share the monopoly which I engrossed as I came suddenly in sight. The flashes, reports, bullets, *sacres*, which in an instant gleamed in my eyes, and roared and sang about my ears, were deafening. How they all contrived to miss me I can't imagine, but miss me they did; and I had passed them about sixty paces, when who should start up over a hedge, a few yards in

advance, but my domino-player Sous-Lieutenant Victor! In an instant his musket was raised within two or three feet of my face. Flash!—bang! I felt a blow as if from a thrust of red-hot steel; and for a moment made sure that my head was off. With difficulty I kept my seat. The horse dashed on, and I was speedily beyond the chance of capture or pursuit. I drew bridle at the first village I reached, and found that Victor's bullet had gone clean through both cheeks. The marks, you see, are still plain enough.

This was quite true. On slightly separating the gray hairs of the captain's whiskers, the places where the ball had made its entrance and exit were distinctly visible.

'A narrow escape,' I remarked.

'Yes, rather; but a miss is as good as a mile. The effusion of blood nearly choked me; and it was astonishing how much wine and spirits it required to wash the taste out of my mouth. I found,' continued Mr Smith, 'on arriving at head-quarters, that Ciudad-Rodrigo had fallen as reported, and that Lord Wellington was hurrying on to storm Badajoz before the echo of his guns should have reached Massena or Soult in the fool's paradise where they were both slumbering. I was of course for some time on the sick-list, and consequently only assisted at the assault of Badajoz as a distant spectator—a part I always preferred when I had a choice. It was an awful, terrible business,' added Mr Smith with unusual solemnity. 'I am not much of a philosopher that I know of, nor, except in service hours, particularly given to religion, but I remember, when the roar and tumult of the fierce hurricane broke upon the calm and silence of the night, and a storm of hell-fire seemed to burst from and encircle the devoted city, wondering what the stars, which were shining brightly overhead, thought of the strife and din they looked so calmly down upon. It was gallantly done, however,' the veteran added in a brisker tone, 'and read well in the Gazette; and that perhaps is the chief thing.'

'But what,' I asked, 'has all this to do with the charming Coralie and your love-adventure?'

'Everything to do with it, as you will immediately find. I remained in Badajoz a considerable time after the departure of the army, and was a more frequent visitor than ever at the house of the excellent dame who had so opportunely aided my escape. She was a kind-hearted soul with all her vindictiveness; and now that the French were no longer riding rough-shod over the city, spoke of those who were lurking about in concealment—of whom there were believed to be not a few—with sorrow and compassion. At length the wound I had received at Lieutenant Victor's hands was thoroughly healed, and I was thinking of departure, when the Andalusian dame introduced me in her taciturn expressive way to a charming young French-woman, whose husband, a Spaniard, had been slain during the assault or sack of the city. The intimacy thus begun soon kindled on my part into an intense admiration. Coralie was gentle, artless, confiding as she was beautiful, and moreover—as Jeannette, her sprightly, black-eyed maid informed me in confidence—extremely rich. Here, gentlemen, was a combination of charms to which only a heart of stone could remain insensible, and mine at the time was not only young, but particularly sensitive and tender, owing in some degree, I daresay, to the low diet to which I had been so long confined; for nothing, in my opinion, takes the sense and pluck out of a man so quickly as that. At all events I soon surrendered at discretion, and was coyly accepted by the blushing lady. There was only one obstacle,' she timidly observed, 'to our happiness. The relatives of her late husband, by law her guardians, were prejudiced, mercenary wretches, anxious to marry her to an old hunk of a Spaniard, so that the property of her late husband, chiefly consisting of

precious stones—he had been a lapidary—might not pass into the hands of foreigners. I can scarcely believe it now,' added Mr Smith with great heat; 'but if I didn't swallow all this stuff like sack and sugar, I'm a Dutchman! The thought of it, old as I am, sets my very blood on fire.'

'At length,' continued Mr Marmaduke Smith, as soon as he had partially recovered his equanimity—'at length it was agreed, after all sorts of schemes had been canvassed and rejected, that the fair widow should be smuggled out of Badajoz as luggage in a large chest, which Jeannette and the Andalusian landlady—I forget that woman's name—undertook to have properly prepared. The marriage ceremony was to be performed by a priest at a village about twelve English miles off, with whom Coralie undertook to communicate. "I trust," said that lady, "to the honour of a British officer"—I had not then received my commission, but no matter—"that he, that you, Captain Smith, will respect the sanctity of my concealment till we arrive in the presence of the reverend gentleman who," she added with a smile like a sunset, "will, I trust, unite our destinies for ever." She placed, as she spoke, her charming little hand in mine, and I, you will hardly credit it, tumbled down on my knees, and vowed to religiously respect the dear angel's slightest wish! Mr Tape, for mercy's sake, pass the wine, or the bare recollection will choke me!'

I must now, for the reasons previously stated, continue the narrative in my own words.

Everything was speedily arranged for flight. Mr Smith found no difficulty in procuring from the Spanish commandant an order which would enable him to pass his luggage through the barrier unsearched; Jeannette was punctual at the rendezvous, and pointed exultingly to a large chest, which she whispered contained the trembling Coralie. The chinks were sufficiently wide to admit of the requisite quantity of air; it locked inside, and when a kind of sailcloth was thrown loosely over it, there was nothing very unusual in its appearance. Tenderly, tremulously did the rejoicing lover assist the precious load into the hired bullock-cart, and off they started, Mr Smith and Jeannette walking by the side of the richly-freighted vehicle.

Mr Smith trod on air, but the cart, which had to be dragged over some of the worst roads in the world, mocked his impatience by its marvellously slow progress, and when they halted at noon to give the oxen water, they were still three good miles from their destination.

'Do you think?' said Mr Smith in a whisper to Jeannette, holding up a full pint flask which he had just drawn from his pocket, and pointing towards the chest—'Do you think?—Brandy and water—eh?'

Jeannette nodded, and the gallant Smith gently approached, tapped at the lid, and in a soft low whisper proffered the cordial. The lid was, with the slightest possible delay, just sufficiently raised to admit the flask, and instantly reclosed and locked. In about ten minutes the flask was returned as silently as it had been received. The enamoured soldier raised it to his lips, made a profound inclination towards his concealed fiancée, and said gently, 'A votre santé, charmante Coralie!' The benignant and joyous expression of Mr Smith's face, as he vainly elevated the angle of the flask in expectation of the anticipated draught, assumed an exceedingly puzzled and bewildered expression. He peered into the opaque tin vessel; pushed his little finger into its neck to remove the loose cork or other substance that impeded the genial flow; then shook it, and listened curiously for a splash or gurgle. Not a sound! Coralie had drained it to the last drop! Mr Smith looked with comical earnestness at Jeannette, who burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter.

'Madame is thirsty,' she said, as soon as she could catch sufficient breath: 'it must be so hot in there.'

'A full pint!' said the captain, still in blank astonishment, 'and strong—very!'

The approach of the carter interrupted what he further might have had to say, and in a few minutes the journey was resumed. The captain fell into a reverie which was not broken till the cart again stopped. The chest was then glided gently to the ground: the driver, who had been previously paid, turned the heads of his team towards Badajoz, and with a brief salutation departed homeward.

Jeannette was stooping over the chest, conversing in a low tone with her mistress, and Captain Smith surveyed the position in which he found himself with some astonishment. No house, much less a church or village, was visible, and not a human being was to be seen.

'Captain Smith,' said Jeannette, approaching the puzzled warrior with some hesitation, 'a slight contretemps has occurred. The friends who were to have met us here, and helped to convey our precious charge to a place of safety, are not, as you perceive, arrived: perhaps they do not think it prudent to venture quite so far.'

'It is quite apparent they are not here,' observed Mr Smith; 'but why not have proceeded in the cart?'

'What, captain! Betray your and madame's secret to yonder Spanish boor. How you talk!'

'Well, but my good girl, what is to be done? Will madame get out and walk?'

'Impossible—impossible!' ejaculated the amiable damsel. 'We should be both recognised, dragged back to that hateful Badajoz, and madame would be shut up in a convent for life. It is but about a quarter of a mile,' added Jeannette, in an insinuating, caressing tone, 'and madame is not so very heavy.'

'The devil!' exclaimed Mr Smith, taken completely aback by this extraordinary proposal. 'You can't mean that I should take that infernal chest upon my shoulders!'

'Mon Dieu! what else can be done?' replied Jeannette with pathetic earnestness: 'unless you are determined to sacrifice my dear mistress—she whom you pretended to so love—you hard-hearted, faithless man!'

Partially moved by the damsel's tearful vehemence, Mr Smith reluctantly approached, and gently lifted one end of the chest, as an experiment.

'There are a great many valuables there besides madame,' said Jeannette, in reply to the captain's look, 'and silver coin is, you know, very heavy.'

'Ah!' exclaimed the perplexed lover. 'It is deucedly unfortunate—still—Don't you think,' he added earnestly, after again essaying the weight of the precious burthen, 'that if madame were to wrap herself well up in this sail-cloth, we might reach your friend the priest's house without detection?'

'Oh, no—no—no!' rejoined the girl. 'Mon Dieu! how can you think of exposing madame to such hazard?'

'How far do you say it is?' asked Captain Smith, after a rather sullen pause.

'Only just over the fields yonder—half a mile perhaps.'

Mr Smith still hesitated, but finally the tears and intreaties of the attendant, his regard for the lady and her fortune, the necessity of the position, in short, determined him to undertake the task. A belt was passed tightly round the chest, by means of which he could keep it on his back; and after several unsuccessful efforts, the charming load was fairly hoisted, and on the captain manfully staggered, Jeannette bringing up the rear.

Vainly did Mr Smith, though perspiring in every pore of his body, and dry as a cartouch-box—for madame had emptied the only flask he had—toil on under a burthen which seemed to grind his shoulder-blades to powder. He declares he must have lost a stone of

flesh at least before, after numerous restings, he arrived, at the end of about an hour, at the door of a small house, which Jeannette announced to be the private residence of the priest. The door was quickly opened by a smart lad, who seemed to have been expecting them; the chest was deposited on the floor, and Jeannette instantly vanished. The lad, with considerate intelligence, handed Mr Smith a draught of wine. It was scarcely swallowed when the key turned in the lock, the eager lover, greatly revived by the wine, sprang forward with extended arms, and received in his enthusiastic embrace—whom do you think?

'Coralie, half-stiffed for want of air, and nearly dead with fright?' suggested Mr Tape.

'That rascally Sous-Lieutenant Victor! half-drunk with brandy and water,' roared Captain Smith, who had by this time worked himself into a state of great excitement. 'At the same moment in ran Jeannette, and, I could hardly believe my eyes, that Jezabel Coralie, followed by half-a-dozen French voltigeurs, screaming with laughter! I saw I was done,' continued Mr Smith, 'but not for the moment precisely how, and but for his comrades, I should have settled old and new scores with Master Victor very quickly. As it was, they had some difficulty in getting him out of my clutches, for I was, as you may suppose, awfully savage. An hour or so afterwards, when philosophy, a pipe, and some very capital wine—they were not bad fellows those voltigeurs—had exercised their soothing influence, I was informed of the exact motives and particulars of the trick which had been played me. Coralie was Victor Dufour's wife. He had been wounded at the assault of Badajoz, and successfully concealed in that Andalusian woman's house; and as the best, perhaps only mode of saving him from a Spanish prison, or worse, the scheme of which I had been the victim was concocted. Had not Dufour wounded me, they would, I was assured, have thrown themselves upon my honour and generosity—which honour and generosity, by the by, would never have got Coralie's husband upon my back, I'll be sworn!'

'You will forgive us, mon cher capitaine?' said that lady with one of her sweetest smiles, as she handed me a cup of wine. 'In love and war, you know, everything is fair.'

'A soldier, gentlemen, is not made of adamant. I was, I confess, softened; and by the time the party broke up, we were all the best friends in the world.'

'And so that fat, jolly-looking Madame Dufour we saw in Paris, is the beautiful Coralie that bewitched Captain Smith?' said Mr Tape thoughtfully—'Well!'

'She was younger forty years ago, Mr Tape, than when you saw her. Beautiful Coralies are rare, I fancy, at her present age, and very fortunately, too, in my opinion,' continued Captain Smith; 'for what, I should like to know, would become of the peace and comfort of society, if a woman of sixty could bewitch a man as easily as she does at sixteen?'

MODEL LODGING-HOUSES FOR THE WORKING-CLASSES.

DURING the last few years, benevolent associations have established lodging-houses for the working-classes, and more especially for the migratory portion of them, in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee, and other places in Scotland, with a marked degree of success, and palpably good results. We have adverted to the subject before; but that was at a time when such concerns were in their infancy. We are now able to show the fruits of an experience of several years, forming the strongest possible encouragement to the establishment of model lodging-houses for the working-classes in places where they have not yet been tried.

In Edinburgh, the lodging-houses which received

migratory labouring people were formerly of a most wretched character—dark, dirty, unventilated, affording miserable accommodations, and no separation of pure from impure; so that they were at once hotbeds of disease and of crime. In the attempt to correct or mitigate these evils by the establishment of model lodging-houses, two things had to be kept in view: that the accommodation to be had at the new houses should be in all these respects better; and that the rates charged should at the same time be no higher. Nor was it lost sight of, that in order to be of any extensive or permanent benefit to the community, the latter element—cheapness—must be obtained by economy of management, not by eleemosynary contributions. Unless such establishments were proved to be self-supporting and remunerative in a pecuniary view, they could not be objects of imitation to the keepers of private lodging-houses.

A small sum (about L.200) having been raised by subscription, the first of the Victoria Lodging-houses in Edinburgh (and it is believed the first of the kind in Great Britain) was opened at No. 85 West Port in September 1844. At first the lower part of the house only, with accommodation for 18 lodgers, was fitted up; soon after another flat was added; and before the expiry of the first year, the whole accommodation which the house could afford (for 62 lodgers) was made use of. The rate of payment was fixed at threepence per night (the seventh night *gratis*, being the usual charge in the lowest class of lodging-houses), each bed being allowed to contain two persons. For sixpence any lodger can obtain exclusive use of a bed. During the first twelve months, the average number of lodgers was only 12 per night, increasing very rapidly in the following months to 30; and during the last six months of the second year rising to 46 per night—the total number of lodgers during the year having been 12,797. During the second year, the income derived from lodgers exceeded the current expenses by L.17, which may be considered fully equivalent to the interest on the original outlay in the purchase, and loss by tear and wear of furniture. The following, or third year, there was a surplus of nearly L.58. During the same year (in August 1847), a second model lodging-house was opened by the association at No. 115 Cowgate, capable of receiving 80 lodgers, in which, during the first year, no fewer than 21,278 persons obtained accommodation; the result being, that at the end of the year there was a surplus of income over expenditure considerably exceeding L.100; and during each of the two years which have since elapsed the surplus has been even greater. The success which had hitherto attended this undertaking, and the great anxiety expressed in many quarters that a house should be established where *unmarried females* might find special protection, led to the establishment of a third Victoria Lodging-house, in No. 2 Merchant Street, for *females and married persons*—unmarried men being excluded; in which, during the first year, recently elapsed, accommodation has been afforded to 9223 persons. The extent of the influence of these establishments will be seen in the annexed table, which shows the number of lodgers in each of the houses during the past year, besides about 2000 children, for whom no charge is made:—

	Men.	Women.	Total.
In West Port House,	16,853	959	19,803
In Cowgate House,	25,367	...	25,367
In Merchant Street House,	1,704	7,519	9,223
Total, giving an average of 1046 weekly,	45,924	8,471	54,395

Nothing has yet been said of the nature of the accommodation to be found in these houses. Without entering into details, which are here impossible, they may be characterised as affording sufficiency without luxury, and cleanliness with the absolute exclusion of

all disorderly or apparently disreputable persons.* In each of the houses the rooms are so numerous as to admit of the classification of lodgers. The bedsteads are all of iron. The system of giving each lodger exclusive use of a bed has not yet been fully carried out in any of these houses; but it has been successfully practised in the Dundee Lodging-house, and has been to some extent adopted in the Edinburgh houses; and its desirableness is fully admitted by those in the management of them.

Each house is under the charge of a superintendent (upon whose efficiency much of the success of the undertaking has been found to depend), and is subject to regulations framed by the committee of management, and strictly enforced upon all lodgers; and in very few cases has difficulty been found in obtaining compliance with them, the absolute power of expulsion being sufficient to secure obedience.

It is difficult to convey a just impression of the greatly-increased comfort, healthiness, and security afforded in these houses, without appearing to exaggerate. They will be much better understood by a visit; to which all interested in the matter are invited, and which will repay the trouble. One or two things, however, may be mentioned about these houses. While there have been now in all some 170,000 lodgers in them, hardly any cases of fever, cholera, or other infectious diseases, have occurred, although the houses are situated in localities very much exposed; and wherever there has been any reason to suspect such disease, the patient has been at once removed to the hospital; so that in no single instance has disease been known to be propagated by means of them. In this respect the contrast between them and the ordinary lodging-houses which they aim at improving is very favourable. Much in this respect is no doubt due to greater cleanliness and better ventilation. In reference to the security they afford, it may be mentioned, that the police are in the habit of directing to them any strangers or persons, especially young females, requiring protection, who may be inquiring for lodgings; and that, in some instances, persons having died in the houses leaving money, it has been duly paid to their legal representatives. The protection afforded to morals and character can hardly be overestimated, and that by a measure of control and by regulations which will be felt a burthen only by the disorderly or the dissolute.

When these establishments were set up, it was not intended that they should come in place of private lodging-houses, but that they should be the means of improving them, by enforcing a higher standard of comfort, order, and cleanliness; and by showing that houses in all these respects so much better conducted than the great proportion of private houses, would be well frequented and receive a marked preference; while at the same time, even under the less economical management of a public committee, with a paid superintendent, they would be able to maintain themselves. The experiment has been eminently successful; and there is reason to believe that the improving influence of these models is now acting upon the other lodging-houses for the working-classes. It was in the view of the committee to keep a register of such lodging-houses as should seem entitled to be recommended by them, but they have not yet found this practicable.

One of the objects of the present paper is to call the attention of those who may be in circumstances to establish such institutions, to the small pecuniary means which are required, and to the facilities which

* In lately looking over an establishment of the same nature on Glasgow Green, we were somewhat surprised, and not a little amused, to hear of the 'commercial gentlemen' who come to the house—meaning, as we took pains to ascertain, much the same kind of persons who frequent ordinary hotels. This, at least, is a strong proof of the tolerable nature of the accommodations. The charge in this house is sixpence a night for exclusive use of a bed.

are afforded by the experience already had in their management. It has been already mentioned, that with a capital of about L.200, the first of the Edinburgh houses was set up, which more than repaid the current expenses at the end of the second year. The success in Aberdeen has been even more remarkable (in this respect nearly equalling that of the Cowgate house); for there, starting with the same capital, and the same nightly charge of threepence, at the end of the first year the committee had in their hands a balance of no less than L.32; the total number of lodgers during the year having been 12,672. The experience at Dundee has been to the same effect.

It ought to be here mentioned, that besides those already named, two other model lodging-houses on a smaller scale are noticed in the papers from which this abstract is prepared. One of them, with accommodation for 36 lodgers, was established in Dalkeith by the Duke of Buccleuch in 1848; and the other, capable of receiving 12 lodgers, at New Pitsligo in Aberdeenshire by Sir John Forbes of Fettercairn in March 1849. For the guidance of any patriotic persons who may have it in view to set up houses on the smaller scale, it may be mentioned that these can hardly be made self-supporting unless the superintendent have at the same time a shop or some other means of income.

The following hint, how to set about the establishment of a model lodging-house, may be taken from the history of the Edinburgh West Port House. The locality being deemed a particularly desirable one, on account of the number and badness of the lodgings in the district, a suitable house was found, with a sufficient number of rooms, and with immediate access from the street, and a lease of it taken for ten years, at a rent of L.25. It was thoroughly cleaned from top to bottom, and supplied with gas and water; considerable alterations being made on the lowest flat, so as to obtain an ample kitchen (all their meals being cooked by the lodgers for themselves) and a washing-house. No alterations were found to be necessary in the upper flats beyond putting all in good repair, cleaning, and affording the means of better ventilation. Each room was then supplied with as many iron bedsteads, and sufficient bedding for each, as were thought convenient, and with chairs; very little other furniture being necessary. The kitchen having been supplied with all the necessary utensils, &c. and above all, the services of a trustworthy and efficient superintendent having been secured, the house was ready for the reception of lodgers; of which notice was given by affixing a very prominent signboard, on which was painted 'Victoria Lodging-House'—with what results has been already shown.

Two books are kept by the superintendent, in one of which he enters, each night, the name of every lodger in the house; the other being a cash-book, in which are entered all the sums received and disbursed. Into further explanations of the details of management we cannot here enter; but every information will be given to any inquirers, and all possible aid afforded to those who may contemplate the establishment of such institutions in other localities; and probably there are very few means by which so much good, with so little harm, may be done, as by the moderate multiplication of such establishments. Those for whose use they were designed are in the habit of expressing very cordially their sense of the benefit thus conferred, and the general propriety of demeanour observed by the inmates is highly commendable. By all means let them prosper, until they shall become superfluous through their very efficiency!

This must be looked to, however, as but a very doubtful event; the immediate interest of having the house full proving too strong a temptation to be outweighed, in the minds of the keepers of the lower class of lodgings, by higher and more distant considerations.

It is difficult to induce such persons to enforce in their houses regulations which have the effect of excluding the profligate and the disorderly; and much time will probably be required before the salutary influence of the model houses shall have *worked down* to so low a level. Until then, at least, they will still be necessary.

ITALIAN OPERA IN LONDON.

THE QUEEN'S THEATRE.

THE spread of musical taste in the British islands is a great fact which seems to be only dawning on the higher organs of periodical literature. One cause of this may be the state of insulation in which composers stand with respect to the professors of other arts and sciences; attaining as they frequently do to the very summit of musical power in comparative ignorance of the sister branches of knowledge. The two artists, for instance, who in vigour and prodigality of invention have surpassed all others in our century, were Scott and Rossini; but they stood in as little relation to each other as the Shakespeare and Rubens of the age of James and Mary de Medicis. The ignorance of composers, however, may be matched by that of the literati; one distinguished member of which body compares music to rope-dancing, while almost all assign it a place among the imitative arts. There can be no greater mistake than this. Music is a feeling, of which sound is only the exponent; and it belongs less to the external than the mysterious and invisible world.

The time is not distant, however, when music will be better understood. Already it is fully taken up by an aristocracy which, from various causes, maintains an influence upon tastes and manners unknown in the same body on the continent. Neither submerged by the people, as in France, nor converted into household and military officers, as in the rest of Europe, the nobility and higher gentry of England are able to make anything popular they choose to adopt heartily. Their reigning passion—more especially that of the female aristocracy—is at present music; and if we look back a hundred years to the unintellectual frivolity of the court of George II., and the reign of Beau Nash and the Bath waters, it will be admitted that society has lost nothing by the change. Already music is making its way downwards through every chink and cranny of society; and even in the lower-middle and humbler classes there is a perceptible gravitation to the greatest works of the greatest masters. The great central Propaganda or fountain-head, however, is the two Italian Operas in London; and having upon a former occasion devoted an article to the physiology of the Opera in Italy,* it may not be uninteresting to say something now of the Queen's Theatre and its rival Covent Garden; in the latter of which the Italian lyric drama has fixed itself on the boards trodden so recently by a Kemble and a Siddons—a revolution in public taste for which mere fashion could never account, and the reasons for which we attempted to develop in the article alluded to.

The Queen's Theatre is situated at the junction of the Haymarket with Pall-Mall, and, considering the number of architectural abortions in London, is a respectable edifice; but seen from Cockspur Street, its effect is marred by the cistern which stands on the roof like a large trunk or portmanteau on the corner of a table. Internally, it is of a horse-shoe shape, and is considered well proportioned. It is of nearly the same size as the Scala di Milan and Covent Garden, which, however, fall considerably short of the magnitude of San Carlo in Naples. The Queen's Theatre is acoustically well constructed, and has the peculiar property of lighting up beautifully for the ballet, in

* 'Italian Opera,' No. 261.

which the appeal is principally to the eye; but there is no spectacle produced on the stage equal to the view from the centre of the curtain, when the eye is directed to the audience on a gala night—that of a crowded drawing-room, for instance, when the six tiers of boxes, hung with silk, are full of the beauty of a London season, the female aristocracy wearing the feathers of the morning.

Between the orchestra and the pit are the stalls or reserved seats, all numbered, and let by the season as well as by the night. Some years ago the price of such seats was fifteen shillings a night; while by subscription, it was thirty guineas for sixty nights, each representation coming thus to only about half a guinea, a saving of nearly a third to the Opera frequenter. There are now two Italian Operas, and the price is raised to a guinea, which will enable the reader to form an idea of the progression in the taste for Italian music during the last dozen years. As regards the classes who frequent the stalls, these are mostly tenanted by the easy bachelors of the aristocracy, and the opulent section of the middle classes; the counting-houses of the City furnishing larger contingents to the stalls than either church, law, or medicine—good incomes being rarely achieved in these until the period of marriage and middle age. When a lawyer does go to the Opera, it is usually on a Saturday night, when the pressure of the business of the week is over. Between the stalls and boxes is the pit, which differs from that of an English theatre in the higher price—varying, according to pressure of demand, from seven shillings to half a guinea—and in the prevalence of evening costume, as well as in the access to the box corridors: for those who receive tickets from subscribers to boxes usually go first into the pit, paying a visit to the family box between acts. In the days of George IV. dandyism, indignant letters from wearers of drab trousers used to appear in the newspapers on their being refused admittance, as incorrect in evening costume; and even the owner of a white hat has been known to expostulate his way into the pit; but such differences have now died away.

The boxes are not open at the sides, as in other English theatres, but, as in Italy, are partitioned, so as to secure perfect privacy of conversation; and the box of a lady of fashion is the epitome of her drawing-room, where she receives a few select visits. The subscription nights are Tuesday and Saturday; and the box on the intervening Thursday night is the property of the manager, on which occasion the entertainments are usually abundant in quantity, to suit families who can afford the entertainment only occasionally. On such evenings, however, the performances are generally too long, and of a too miscellaneous and detached a character to please the habitual frequenter, who talks rather contemptuously of a 'long Thursday.' The prices of boxes vary considerably, according to demand—from five to twelve guineas—during May, June, and July; but they are to be had on much lower terms previous to Easter, for the company of artists is not usually completed until the close of the Italian Opera in Paris. This regularity has been much broken in upon since the Revolution of 1848; but there can be no doubt that the Paris season will be henceforth made to suit that of London, as Mr Lumley, the proprietor of the Queen's Theatre, has become the lessee of the Italian Opera in Paris. Towards the close of the London season boxes again fall in price, although the company is in full strength; because at the latter end of July and during all August town is gradually thinning; so that just before the commencement of partridge-shooting, on the 1st of September, and about the period of the prorogation of parliament, a few representations are given at playhouse prices, and the London fashionable season is supposed to terminate. Thus the Italian Operas regulate them-

selves by the parliamentary session; the 12th of August—when grouse-shooting commences—hastening the 'massacre of the innocents,' as the hasty legislation of this part of the year is called, and the approach of the 1st of September putting them out of pain, as there would be no chance of carrying on the business of the season after that epoch.

A large proportion of the boxes are not let to families, but to booksellers, who relet them to third parties. This connection of the proprietors of circulating libraries with the Opera arose from subscribers handing over their box to their bookseller to be let on nights when they were themselves otherwise engaged; and this was some years ago a lucrative branch of business in the hands of Messrs Sams, Mitchell, Ebers, and Andrews; although it has latterly been much divided, all the principal music-sellers, and even wine-merchants and other tradesmen in the large thoroughfares in the vicinity of the theatre, speculating largely on the rise and fall of Opera admissions, and being, as it were, musical brokers. For this reason there is no fixity in the price of boxes and stalls, exorbitant prices being demanded on extraordinary occasions—such as the production of an opera which has had great success in Paris or on the continent; or on any unusual combination of talent—when, for instance, a Pasta and a Malibran appear together in the same opera, as they did in 'Semiramide,' when the former played her great part of the Assyrian queen, and Malibran filled the fine *contralto* part of Arsace. The visit of a foreign sovereign usually creates a bumper. The writer of this article was invited to accompany a family to the Queen's Theatre on the night of the Emperor of Russia's visit; and the box engaged for the occasion, although a small one on the fourth tier, cost twelve guineas.

It only remains to notice the gallery, one half of which is devoted to stalls at five shillings, and the other half, without stalls, is open to the public at two shillings and sixpence, the lowest sum of admission; and here may be seen the moustached foreigner, who enjoys and understands what he sees and hears; or the country bumpkin, who must not return home without being able to say that he has been to the Opera. Probably the heat sets him to sleep; but at all events he rarely sits out the second act, saying to his friend, after the conclusion of this renowned and unintelligible entertainment, 'Ah, you never catches me in such a slow coach as that again!' Those who are in the pit get access *ad libitum* to the gallery, and the back of the upper seat is the best place in the house for hearing an overture or favourite air, although the features of the singers are undistinguishable.

The expenditure of the British public on the two Italian Operas is consequently very large, but the expenses of the establishment are so great, that no lessee of the Queen's Theatre can be pointed out who has made a fortune. This Temple of the Muses is almost as well known to the public by the huge bankruptcies of Chambers, Waters, Ebers, Monk Mason, and Laporte, as by the successes of Pasta, Malibran, and Lind; for when the expenses range from £700 to £1,000 every time the curtain rises, it may be easily understood that a few months of scanty receipts involve an adventurer of small means in irretrievable debts and embarrassments, and if the defalcation continue for several seasons consecutively, it must engulf a colossal capital. Mr Lumley, the present proprietor, forms an exception to the list I have given; for he had the good fortune to get possession of the Queen's Theatre after these successive bankruptcies, at the expense of which the modern inordinate appetite for Italian Opera has been created; and by the sale of boxes in perpetuity, he realised about £90,000 of his capital. He has consequently been punctual in his payments, although the establishment of an Italian Opera in Covent Garden, supported by several of

the very first singers, unquestionably damaged the value of his property, and involved him in a struggle which had never been anticipated at the period when he held the monopoly of Italian operatic entertainment. Last season it seemed very doubtful if, notwithstanding the enormous receipts, London could support the expense of two Italian Operas; but the lessorship of the Paris Opera is a great point gained for Mr Lumley. On the other hand, the great prospective receipts of the coming year of Exhibition will assuredly prolong the career of Covent Garden for at least another season.

As regards the detail of the expenses, the principal items are the high salaries of individual singers. A highest-class female singer gets about L.3000 sterling for a season, and a first-class male singer about L.2000. The former, with concerts and her Paris engagement, may consequently realise a sum of between L.6000 and L.7000; but if she creates a sensation (which, however, seldom lasts above a season or two), much more. A *prima donna* of this description keeps her carriage, lives in handsome apartments, has usually all her family living on her, often including idle sauntering brothers; but she spends her time on anything but a bed of roses, from the constant apprehension of new candidates for public favour. Nothing can be more unreasonable than the outcry against the high prices given to such singers, their remuneration being in proportion to the sums which they draw to the theatre. During a considerable period of the freshness of their voice, their want of musical and dramatic experience prevents their occupation of the foremost rank; and, on the other hand, when in the plenitude of dramatic power, voice and beauty are often on the wane: so that the few years of heyday must pay for a laborious education, and provide for old age. Such is the explanation given by singers when discussing this popular fallacy, which puts one in mind of the Swiss innkeepers in the high Alps, who, when taxed with having charged exorbitant prices, answer that whatever may be the case in England, the year of the Alpine innkeeper consists of only two months.

'No gains without pains' is a law from which no one is exempt; neither the artist of genius, creating the sketch out of the rude embryo, and the picture out of the sketch, nor the statesman, constructing his scheme of national policy from grains of heterogeneous fact. From this law nobody is less free than the operatic singer. When he has completed his elementary musical knowledge, passed the conservatory with éclat, and gained success on the stage, he has to go through the rehearsals, which, of all tiresome operations, are the most tiresome: and little do those who see an opera after rehearsal know what this ordeal is. The theatre, partially lighted by open shutters, and aided by an unsightly gas-pipe run up in front of the stage, producing neither the gladness of day nor the artificial brilliancy of night; the orchestra and all the performers in hats, bonnets, and greatcoats; and the business, like a crab, or the pig of the Irishman, going forwards by dint of going backwards, the musical director stopping every now and then to recommence from a previous point; in short, whoever has had the patience and the curiosity to sit out one opera rehearsal would never repeat the process. It may be said that the bread of the singer is earned by the sweat of the brow; and this was last season no metaphor in the case of Lablache, a man of twenty stone weight, wearing in the dog-days, in the opera of the 'Tempest,' a dress of hairy skins, with even his arms and hands covered with mittens, imitating the tawny hide and claw-nails of the brutish humanity of Caliban.

The best dancers are highly prized, and receive salaries not much inferior to that of the best singers. Taglioni, in the height of her reputation, used to receive from 2000 to 3000 francs per night, or from L.80 to

L.120 sterling. Male dancers are paid less. Perrot used to receive L.60 per night during the period of his vigour. But dancers are liable to greater vicissitudes than singers: by a false step they may be lamed for weeks or months; and even the strain of a tendon may reduce a man to a secondary or tertiary position as a dancer—fortunate, as was the case with Perrot, if he has the general capacity, to become ballet-master. The Queen's Theatre has still the monopoly of the ballet, dancing in Covent Garden being confined to the so-called *divertissements*, which are introduced either in the regular course of the business of an opera—such as coronations, marriages, and village festivals—or to relieve the tedium between acts. In grand operas, such as those of Meyerbeer, the Queen's Theatre cannot compete with Covent Garden; but the ballet preserves to the former a feature of attraction peculiarly its own.

A ballet may be characterised as a fable in dumb show, in which opportunities are created for dancing, and frequently for supernatural machinery. The French school of ballet in the last century used to be pastoral; and in the days of the elder Vestris the ballet was confined to a few simple incidents, such as may happen in a village, with its lovers' jealousies, the unwillingness of a parent to give his daughter in marriage, and the arrival of the generous lord of the manor, who furnishes a dowry, pacifies the grating parent, and makes Colin a happy bridegroom. Afterwards the ballet became more varied and romantic, with considerable changes of scenery and costume, often taken from a popular tale, such as the 'Manon l'Escant' of the Abbé Prevost, or the 'Paul and Virginia' of Bernardin St Pierre, the two most popular French narratives of the latter half of the eighteenth century. The later French ballets are like the modern romances of the French school, more brilliant and varied, but much more artificial, and trusting too much to sudden surprises and changes.

But the attention to historical accuracy of costume, and the faithful representation of the architecture of particular periods, is interesting and instructive: thus what the French school of ballet has lost in easy and unconstrained development of plot, has been partly regained by an approximation to the illusion of time and place. There is far more historical, geographical, and archeological learning in a modern French ballet than formerly. Nothing, for instance, can be more striking than to see, as in 'The Girl of Ghent' (reproduced, by the by, in London by Mr Bunn with great ability), a scene exactly taken from one of Teniers's wedding pictures, with several hundred figures in the exact costume and colours of the period—from the drunkard with his red stockings and clogs, to the cavalier in the splendid costume of the period, not to mention the dwarf piper on the beer-barrel; so that we feel as if we looked out of a window near Antwerp in the middle of the seventeenth century. If the rehearsal of an opera is a laborious business, that of a ballet is still more so; for in the former case all the persons engaged, from the first singer at L.100 per night, down to the chorister at ten shillings, have the requisite musical knowledge; but in the case of the ballet, a great number of persons are employed whose business is merely to wear a costume and form part of a crowd. These supernumeraries require much drilling, and are most wretchedly paid, so that if they have a family, it is a difficult matter to keep soul and body together; and while the singer and dancer of the first class often ends life in a luxurious villa, surrounded by every comfort, the last stage of the supernumerary is too often that described by the bard of terrible realities—the parish pauper asylum, with 'the moping idiot and the madman gay.'

We now pass from the stage to the orchestra, which, however subordinate in the English operas of a gene-

ration ago, and even in those of Italy up to the middle of last century, now demands a degree of completeness, variety, and excellence which forms a subject of solicitude to the manager. This has resulted from the great importance which the wind instruments acquired in the age of Mozart, and more especially from the influence which the school of Beethoven has indirectly had upon the stage. Although the latter composed only one opera, yet the full power of the modern orchestra was never developed until his symphonies were produced; and it is since Meyerbeer gave up his early disposition to imitate the Rossinian school of melody, and became the legitimate successor of Beethoven in his varied transitions and rich instrumental colouring, that he has been acknowledged as the first composer of the operatic school, in which the orchestra is predominant, and has produced a revolution of powerful influence in the elevation of the orchestra in the lyric drama.

A few years ago the orchestra of the Queen's Theatre amounted to 54 performers, and it is now increased to 74, composed as follows:—14 first violins; 14 second do.; 8 tenors; 8 violoncellos, and 8 double basses; 2 flutes; 2 clarionets; 2 oboes; 2 bassoons; 4 horns; 2 trumpets; 4 trombones; and lastly, 4 drums.

The position of the orchestral performer is in emolument much inferior to that of the singer even of the second or third rank; the highest sum I ever recollect being paid to a musician being L.5 per night. The recipient in this case was Signor Dragonetti, certainly the greatest double bass in our generation. The musical director is of course an exception. Mr Balfe received from Mr Lumley L.1000 for the season; which, considering his position at the very head of his profession as an English composer, and the only one who ever was universally popular on the continent, is not extravagant. This sum apart, the orchestra costs on an average somewhat more than L.100 per night. But if the musician has not the large income of the singer or dancer, he is less liable to vicissitudes. He runs neither the risk of spraining his ankle nor catching a chronic cold; and long after the age when singers and dancers are past work, the musician can ply his employment, which, occasioning a healthy excitement, conduces to longevity, unless when efforts are made in which the organic laws of nature are violated; such as in certain wind instruments being played by persons having a tendency to pulmonary disease.

So much for the Queen's Theatre; Covent Garden will, we hope, on another occasion, furnish us with a still more varied spectacle.

THE OD FORCE.

It is nearly a century ago since Mesmer began his remarkable career, and six-and-thirty years have passed since he descended unhonoured to the grave. But when ridiculed and defamed by the would-be wise ones of his day, he is said to have retorted by declaring that ere 1852 the world would be convinced of the genuineness of his pretensions. That epoch is now at hand, and lo! the prophecy is coming true. Within the last few months there has been a stirring in men's minds. Not a year ago, mesmerism was still laughed at by the vulgar, and scouted by men of science; and the few who in heart gave heed to it, were careful how they let the quizzing public into their secret. Now all this is changed; since winter commenced, a revolution has been all but accomplished. Poor Mesmer is no longer vilified as a charlatan; he is about to win his long-deferred laurels.

A new truth, it has been well said, has to encounter three normal stages of opposition: In the first, it is denounced as an imposture; in the second—that is, when it is beginning to force itself into notice—it is cursorily examined, and plausibly explained away; in

the third, or *cui bono?* stage, it is decried as useless, and hostile to religion. And when at length it is fully admitted, it passes only under a protest that it has been perfectly known for ages! As mesmerism has now reached at all events the third stage of belief, it may prove not uninteresting to glance at its present aspect.

Mesmer declared he had discovered a cosmical (or world-wide) power, by means of which he could induce sundry startling phenomena in his patients; but his whole system was regarded as a piece of daring charlatanism, until lately a laborious and inquisitive German stumbled upon a something somewhat similar. Von Reichenbach, in the course of his researches, became aware of a certain power, undreamed of by modern physiologists, pervading both living beings and inert matter, to which he gave the arbitrary name of *Od*. Whatever this was, it could be both seen and felt, though only persons of a certain (relaxed or irritable) temperament were capable of perceiving it. In the dark, such persons saw dim flames of light issuing and waving from the poles of a magnet; and if a hand were held up, the same luminous appearance was visible at the finger-tips. When Reichenbach, to test the reality of this, had a powerful lens so placed that it should concentrate the light of the flames (if flames there were) upon a point of the wall of the room, the patient at once saw the light upon the wall at the right place; and when the inclination of the lens was shifted, so as to throw the focus successively on different points, the sensitive observer never failed in pointing out the right spot. Reichenbach also found that when slow passes were made with a strong magnet along the surface of the body, his subjects experienced sensations rather unpleasant than otherwise, as of a light draught of air blown upon them in the path of the magnet. When the northward pole of a magnet was employed, the sensation was that of a cool draught; while the southward pole, on the contrary, excited the sensation of a warm one. He soon discovered that the whole body possessed these *Od* qualities, and that the one side of a person was *polar* to the other; that is to say, one's right side bears the same relation to his left as the negative and positive sides of a horse-shoe magnet: so that when two persons take hold of each other's hands *normally* (left to right, and right to left), the *Od* current passes through both persons unobstructedly, but sometimes attended by uneasy sensations. But by changing hands the circle is broken, and opposite currents meet: so that if the two persons be equal in *odalic* power, no effect is produced, the rival currents mutually repelling each other; but if unequal, a sense of inward conflict ensues, which quickly becomes intolerable. We have ourselves experienced this.

'But what does all this testimony to the reality of the *Od* force amount to?' says the sceptic. 'The subjectivity of your evidence renders it worthless. All that you can say is, that you and a few others see and feel so-and-so; and as we, and the great majority of men, see and feel nothing of the kind, we must just set you down as very fanciful persons, who are the dupes of your own imaginations.' This, in truth, is a very damaging line of argument, and, coupled with the charge of collusion brought against all platform exhibitions of mesmerism, was deemed sufficient to shelve it altogether. The only obvious way of overcoming this argument was by exhibiting so many severely-tested cases as gradually to overwhelm scepticism, by making it more astonishing that so many honest and sensible men should be deceived by impostors, or duped by their fancy, than that the marvels which they avouched should be true.

Fortunately a more speedy and satisfactory remedy for scepticism has at length been found. An objective proof of mesmerism has just been discovered; and it

is so simple in its nature that any one can try it for himself. Dr Herbert Mayo, well known both in the literary and medical world, has of late been residing as an invalid at Boppard on the Rhine; and anxious to wile away the long tedious nights of winter, he resolved to engage in the study of the higher mathematics, and with this view sent for Herr Caspari, professor of that science in the gymnasium at Boppard. It was on the last night of December last that the German professor entered the room of his invalid pupil, and after the hour's lesson was over, they entered into desultory conversation. 'I am told you have written something on the divining-rod,' said Herr Caspari, 'and as I have two or three experiments possibly akin to it, I thought it might not be uninteresting for you to see them.' He added that, so far as he knew, they were original, and that, though he had shown them to many, he had never yet received any explanation of them. He then attached a gold ring to a silk thread, wound one end of the thread round the first joint of his forefinger, and held the ring suspended above a silver spoon. After a few seconds' quiescence, lo and behold! the ring began to oscillate backwards and forwards, or to and from Herr Caspari. At the suggestion of the operator, the maid was then summoned, and directed to place her hand in his unengaged one; and forthwith the oscillations of the ring became *transverse*! Herr Caspari next took a pea-like bit of something, which he called *schneefel-kies*, and which he said exhibited another motion: when held suspended over either of the fingers, it rotated one way; when held suspended over the thumb, it rotated in the contrary direction. The professor then took his departure, promising to return on the morrow to assist in any exploratory experiments which his pupil might think fit to make.

The first dark hours of the new year, which with us came in amid many sounds, found the invalid Mayo revolving in his lonely chamber what these things might signify. They immediately seemed to him to be connected with the mystery of the divining-rod, and with Reichenbach's Od force; and his first supposition was amply confirmed by his subsequent experiments. But before detailing these, we must first explain his terms. Any article, of any shape, suspended either by silk or cotton thread, the other end of which is wound round the nail joint of the forefinger or thumb, he calls an *odometer*. The thread must be long enough to allow the ring, or whatever it is, to reach to about half an inch from the table, upon which you rest your elbow, to steady your hand. As soon as the ring becomes stationary, place under it on the table what substances you please—these he calls *Od-subjects*. A good arming for the odometer is gold, or a better still, a small cone of shell-lac about an inch long; the best *od-subjects* are gold, silver, and one's forefinger. All *od-subjects* do not act equally well with each odometer: for instance, an odometer of dry wood remains stationary over gold, while it moves with great vivacity over glass; and over rock-crystal shell-lac acts very feebly, while a glass odometer oscillates brilliantly. We may add that, in our own experience, the *transverse* oscillations are never so strong as the longitudinal; doubtless because the former act against the attraction of the body, while the latter act with it. The following are a few of Dr Mayo's experiments:—

1. Odometer (we will suppose armed with shell-lac), held over three sovereigns heaped loosely together to form the *od-subject*; the odometer suspended from the forefinger of a person of either sex. *Result*—Longitudinal oscillations.

2. Let the experimenter, continuing experiment 1, take with his or her unengaged hand the hand of a person of the opposite sex. *Result*—Transverse oscillations of the odometer.

3. Then the experiment being continued, let a person of the sex of the experimenter take and hold the unen-

gaged hand of the second party. *Result*—Longitudinal oscillations of the odometer.

4. Repeat experiment 1, and the longitudinal oscillations being established, touch the forefinger which is engaged in the odometer with the forefinger of your other hand. *Result*—The oscillations become transverse.

5. Repeat experiment 1, and the longitudinal oscillations being established, bring the thumb of the same hand into contact with the finger implicated in the odometer. *Result*—The oscillations become transverse.

6. Then continuing experiment 5, let a person of the same sex take and hold your unengaged hand. *Result*—The oscillations become again longitudinal.

7. Experiment 1 being repeated, take and hold in your disengaged hand two or three sovereigns. *Result*—The oscillations become transverse.

8. Continuing experiment 7, let a person of the same sex take and hold your hand which holds the sovereigns. *Result*—The oscillations become longitudinal.

The following experiments, with results exactly parallel to the preceding, possess the greatest physiological interest:—

19. Hold the odometer over the tip of the forefinger of your disengaged hand. *Result*—Rotatory motion in the direction of the hands of a watch.

20. Hold the odometer over the thumb of your disengaged hand. *Result*—Rotatory motion against that of the hands of a watch.

21. Hold up the forefinger and thumb of the disengaged hand, their points being at two and a-half inches apart. Hold the odometer in the centre of a line which would join the points of the finger and thumb. *Result*—Oscillations transverse to the line indicated.

The development thus given of the few isolated and long-herded experiments of Herr Caspari was by no means so simple an affair as it may seem to be. For several days Dr Mayo was in doubt as to the genuineness of the results, so capricious and contradictory were they; and it was only when he discovered that approaching the thumb close to the other fingers of the odometer hand had the same effect as bringing it into contact with the odometer finger, that he succeeded in obtaining unvarying results.

'The interest of these experiments,' says Dr Mayo, 'is unquestionably very considerable. They open a new vein of research, and establish a new bond of connection between physical and physiological science, which cannot fail to promote the advancement of both. They contribute a mass of objective and physical evidence to give support and substantiality to the subjective results of Von Reichenbach's experiments. They tend to prove the existence of some universal force, such as that to which he has given theoretical shape and form, under the designation of Od. And such a universal force, what other can we deem it to be than the long-vilipended influence of Mesmer, rendered bright, and transparent, and palatable, by passing through the filter of science?'

For his other experiments, especially those with the odometer and magnetic needle, as well as for a list of some other substances suitable for experimenting with, we must refer to the book itself. Our readers will find the odometer treated of in a supplementary chapter (the twelfth) to the new edition, just published, of Dr Mayo's 'Letters on the Truths contained in Popular Superstitions'—a work of the most absorbing interest, in which a number of astonishing material and mental phenomena are systematically treated, and the latest discoveries of science are made to shed light on the old horrible legends of Vampirism, on True Ghosts, on the mysteries of Trance and Somnambulism; and lastly, on Mesmerism, and the higher trance-phenomena of prevision and clairvoyance. It is no secret that Sir William Hamilton and Sir David Brewster (two of our most distinguished men of science) are

now converts to the new doctrines, so that there is now no risk of these not obtaining the fullest investigation; and of the few good books at present published on this subject, we know of none so curious, so full, and so dispassionate, as this of Dr Mayo's. We cannot at present enter on so wide a field of inquiry as his little volume opens up; we must content ourselves with a few further remarks on his latest discovery—the odometer.

In concert with a fellow-dabbler in the black arts, we first repeated Dr Mayo's experiments, and then began examining for ourselves. Knowing that when a person wishes to consult a clairvoyant at a distance, he supposes he can do so without being brought into personal contact with the clairvoyant, by simply sending a lock of hair, a handkerchief, or anything that has been long worn about the person, it was natural to suspect that these articles might be impregnated with the peculiar Od of the sender. At anyrate, we found that if we suspended a gold ring by a woman's hair, a transverse motion ensued, as if a female had been actually brought into contact with us. In like manner, if a woman were using the odometer, by making a man's hair part of the suspending cord, a change immediately ensued in the oscillations, as if a man had laid his hand upon hers. All we can as yet say further is, that the odometer oscillated with more than usual vivacity when suspended over the spinal cord of a boy; while over a well-developed female head, a similar action took place—with this difference, that it was the *transverse* oscillations that were most energetic. We propose for ourselves, and particularly recommend to others who are better fitted for such inquiries, a course of experiments with the brain and eye of men and animals. Von Reichenbach thinks he has now identified his Od force with diamagnetism; and the electrometer has already shown that muscular action is produced by a kindred agency.* The brain itself, indeed, has been likened to an electric machine, and in part the parallelism is correct; for there is a waste of brain in thinking, and a waste of zinc when electricity is being evolved.

The experiments with the hair remarkably corroborate Dr Mayo's (No. 2), in establishing the *sexual* difference of Od; and we doubt not some more delicate odometer will soon be discovered, by means of which the individual varieties of Od will become distinguishable. That such varieties exist is already known. It has often been remarked that people mesmerically entranced are differently, sometimes most disagreeably, affected by the different persons who then approach them. A gentleman had a brother in delicate health, and exquisitely sensitive to Od, whom he used to mesmerise himself; for of several who had been tried, there was but one other person whose hand (in mesmerising) the brother could bear at all. This was a maid-servant, who was herself highly susceptible; and she said that she perceived, when entranced, the suitability of her influence, and that of the brother, to the patient—using the singular expression that they were *nearly of the same colour*. She said that the patient's od-emanation was of a pink-colour, and that of the brother's was a brick-colour—a flatter, deeper red; and she endeavoured to find some one else with the

same coloured Od to suit her master. 'In some experiments made at Dr Leighton's house in Gower Street,' says Dr Mayo, 'I remember it was distinctly proved that each of the experimenters produced different effects on the same person. The patient was one of the Okeys, of mesmeric celebrity; and the party consisted of Dr Elliotson, Mr Wheatstone, Dr Grant, Mr Kiernan, and some others. Mr Wheatstone tabulated the results. Each of us mesmerised a sovereign; and it was found that on each trial the trance-coma, which contact with the thus mesmerised gold induced, had a characteristic duration for each of us.' Thus it seems as if every one had a spiritual effluvia peculiar to himself, and more or less affecting those with whom he comes in contact—even as every one has a peculiar bodily effluvia, by which you see a dog track one's footsteps in the grass; though possibly the emanation in both cases is the same.

May we not discern in this a clearing up of some of those mysteries which have so long baffled thoughtful inquirers? May we not see in this an explanation of those unaccountable predilections which at times seize us?—of that 'love at first sight,' so long derided, and yet so true? A child in its nurse's arms will cry instantaneously when some persons approach it—persons whom it has never seen before—and often the instinctive feeling of aversion proves permanent; while to others, equally strangers to it, it will stretch out its little arms delightedly, as if to well-known friends. And which of us cannot recall some case in his lifetime when he has been fascinated on first sight—he knew not how—often without ever exchanging a syllable with his charmer? It is a phenomenon that happens every day, and is not less powerful in its influence than frequent in its occurrence, yet it has never been accounted for. Plato sought to explain this mystery by the notion, that souls were united in a pre-existent state, and that love is the yearning of the spirit to reunite with the spirit with which it formerly made one, and which it discovers on earth. How often has this beautiful idea inspired the poet's strain! The Od force clears up Schiller's 'Mystery of Reminiscence' (as he titles his love poem) much more simply and satisfactorily than do the dreams of Plato. Indeed, we doubt not that this odic influence is the real basis of several of the most powerful of the animal feelings.

Another thing worth noting is, that the Od force exists in, and is given out by, inorganic bodies, as well as by living bodies. One instance of this will be seen in No. 7 of Dr Mayo's experiments, where it is evident that the sovereigns give out Od in the same way as if another person had taken hold of the operator's unengaged hand. But this power is by no means confined to gold; silver, lead, zinc, iron, copper, coal, bone, hair, horn, dry wood, charcoal, cinder, glass, soap, wax, shell-lac, sulphur, earthenware, and some other substances, have already been found to exhibit Od qualities when tested by the odometer; and probably all other substances will be found to possess more or less of the same power; and the few experiments already made (the odometer is not yet six weeks old) seem to show that each substance, as well as each individual, has a quality of Od peculiar to itself.

This strange force, in fact, is cosmical, as Mesmer long ago affirmed his to be. It extends throughout space, and reaches us even from the stars. Von Reichenbach's patients were quite sensible of the influence of the heavenly bodies—the sun and fixed stars being Od-negative, and the moon and planets Od-positive: in other words, the former causing the sensation as of a cool draught of air—the latter of a warm one. May not this exhibit the germ of astrology—of the ancient and almost universal belief in the influence of the heavenly host upon the destiny of man? although, doubtless, much of the basis of that old doctrine still remains lost to us. How does attraction act? May

* An anatomical inquirer asserts, that the muscles of the human body are evidently capable of exerting (or rather transmitting) an enormously greater force than we ordinarily see them do: all that is requisite to attain this being a greater evolution of electricity by the brain; or, in other words, a greater intensity of volition. The astonishing influence of the volitive process in producing strength, is evident from the prodigious muscular power occasionally exhibited by persons when inordinately excited by passion—still more remarkably, from the supernatural strength of fever-frenzy or of mania. It is worthy of notice, also, that the gigantic strength of Samson came by access, or impulse. We may add in connection with this subject, that a person has just patented a new motive power, which acts by passing electricity along a fibrous substance—that is to say, just as our muscular system does.

we look for a solving of this mystery, too, in the new powers which the researches of the mesmerists are now beginning to disclose? But there is no limit to conjecture here. An ocean of new and strange things spreads out before us, brooded over as by the clouds of the dawn; and as here and there the faint light of morning penetrates the haze, it reveals a prospect that makes the boldest hold his breath, and the most daring imagination confess its feebleness.

One word more, and we have done. The subjects of the electro-biologists (so self-styled) are made to *mesmerise themselves* by fixing their eyes intently for some time on a piece of bright metal placed in the palm of their hand. That the Od force of the metal may assist the result is probable; but even the metal itself is by no means indispensable to the success of the experiment. We have heard of at least one person who could entrance himself by gazing fixedly on the cornice of his room; and we could show how the same thing has been accomplished for 8000 years in India, simply by a steadfast concentration of thought. But in our own day, and on the testimony of numerous travellers, we find the feats of the electro-biologists exactly paralleled on the banks of the Nile. The present magicians of Cairo take a boy (the young, be it recollected, from their delicate susceptibility, are most readily affected by mesmeric influences), making him stoop down and gaze steadfastly into a little pool of ink in the hollow of his palm; and after continuing thus for a little while, the youth is said to describe to the stranger any absent person or object as he is commanded. Nay, the stranger himself is sometimes subjected to the experiment; and forthwith, on command, beholds armies, processions, &c. in the inky mirror which he holds in his palm. With some travellers the Cairo magicians are unsuccessful; but the electro-biologists are liable to similar failure—the results in both cases depending on the more or less susceptible organization of the persons experimented with.

NOTE BY THE EDITORS.—We have ourselves some doubts as to the cause of the oscillations and gyrations described in this article. It will require many farther trials to demonstrate clearly that they are not the result of involuntary movements in the hand of the experimentalist. Our readers may, however, have some amusement in trying over the experiments, and endeavouring to detect some less mysterious cause for the phenomena than *Od*.

DESERT OF ATACAMA.

A TRAVELLER through the highlands of Peru found lately in the Desert of Atacama the dried remains of an assemblage of human beings, seated in a semicircle as when alive, and staring into the burning waste before them. They had not been buried here; life had not departed before they thus sat around; but hope was gone; the invader was at hand; and no escape being left, they had come hither to die. They still sit immovable in that dreary desert: dried like mummies by the effect of the hot air, they still keep their position, sitting up as in solemn council, while over that dread Areopagus silence broods everlastingly.

The scene is described by Dr Ried, in a letter from Valparaiso to a friend at Ratisbon, to whom he sent some of the mummies for deposition in the museum of the Zoological-Mineralogical Society of that city, where they now are. The letter is dated from the old Peruvian fortress of Lasana, on the skirts of the Desert of Atacama, and is as follows:—

As I announced to you in my last, I am now on the road to Sucre, the capital of Bolivia. Four days after our departure from Valparaiso, we reached Cobija, from which the road leads for one and a-half or two leagues (twenty leagues to a degree) along the coast; it then turns towards the east. The shore consists of coarse sand, and is bespread with fragments of rock, which the frequent earthquakes have shaken down from the

overhanging cliffs. The first mountain-range, which runs parallel with the sea at a distance of at most 1000 paces, rises to a height of about 4000 feet. The way up leads through a steep ravine, the bed of an antediluvian torrent, and in four, or four and a-half hours, we find ourselves on the plain—in the Desert of Atacama. I will not venture to give a description of this waste. You may imagine, however, a vast undulating plain, whereon no trace of life is to be seen, where no insect shows itself, where no plant grows, where the stillness of the grave is only broken by the moaning of the wind, where the surface of the earth consists of a calcareous mass—out of which salt and saltpetre, and similar products, shine forth abundantly—where a fine dust and a glaring refraction of the sun's rays make it painful to look around; and where, finally, here and there, as the sole proof that men had once been here, the mummies of mules, of horses, and of human beings, are seen dried and undecomposed—and you may have a faint picture of Atacama.

After four days' march I came to Calama, a colony in the midst of an immense morass, where the traveller gives the mules water, and allows them to rest. One cannot possibly imagine anything more dreary than this place. The marsh contains a sort of bulrush, and a liquid which has nothing in common with water, except that it is liquid, and which it is almost impossible to drink—and yet we must drink it, although it produces diarrhoea. This morass is the source of a river, which, nearer the coast, and under the appellation Lao, forms the boundary between Bolivia and Peru. If little channels are made in the banks of this river, their bed soon becomes petrified; and grass, bulrushes, and whatever vegetation may be near, is covered with a crust of lime. In two days' time I reached Chiu-Chiu, an ancient Peruvian burying-place; and here, in an extensive half-moon, sit men, women, and children—from 500 to 600 in number—all in the same attitude, and gazing vacantly before them—some fallen down, some partly covered with sand. One feels himself transplanted into another world, and fancies that these ghastly features ask, 'What seekest thou here?'

The common opinion is, that they were buried in this place: mine is, that they buried themselves. For, *firstly*, there is no place in the neighbourhood where they could have dwelt; *secondly*, many women are among them with their infants at the breast; and *thirdly*, the similar attitude of them all, and the expression of grief which is still discernible on most of the countenances, prove sufficiently that they had withdrawn hither in despair when the Spaniards conquered and devastated their land. There is, moreover, on the boundary of this desert a place called Tucuman, which, in the language of the country, means, 'All is lost.'

They had the belief that if they died, they would be removed to a better world towards the west, on which account there are cooking utensils found beside them full of maize. The whole scene produces a deeply melancholy impression—on me at least it had that effect. With this you will receive two of these dried human beings; more I cannot send, on account of the many difficulties, and the great expense of transport. The cases for these two must be sent hither from Valparaiso, for in Cobija there is no wood at all. The people and the mules must be hired at the last-named place, and for each mule I must pay from eighteen to twenty dollars.

Not far from the same place are the so-famous meteorolithes [stones supposed to have fallen from the air], which you will receive at the same time with the mummies. It is my opinion that they are not meteorolithes, but are of volcanic origin. The first was found about fifty years ago. They lie on the road by which the Indians carried the Peruvian bark to Copiapo in Chili. At first they were thought to be silver, and the Indians made themselves spurs of them.

Those which have not already been collected are covered over by the drifting sand, and one must dig in order to get at them. With little trouble we may convince ourselves that a volcanic eruption once took place here, for the direction of a distinct vein can easily be followed. I have my compass with me, and find that these stones contain a large quantity of iron. The stones appear in about 23° 30' south latitude, and between forty-five and fifty Spanish leagues distant from the coast. You will get too, with these, several lumps of salt, of which I here discovered six or eight enormous veins and beds.

At the north-east end of the coast I reached Lasana, a fortress of the old Peruvians. It is built on a tongue of land between the two arms of a small river, and appears to have been the last place of refuge whither the Peruvians withdrew when pursued on all sides by the Spaniards. The style of building is exactly similar to that of our old German marauder fortresses—the walls being of coarse masonry, and the small rooms, holes, and hidingplaces endless and indescribable. No room is more than eight feet square, many scarcely five; doors two feet in height; windows few in number, and those not larger than one's fist; and withal the whole town (a hundred or a hundred and fifty families perhaps may have dwelt here) built like one house, in which the greater part had to pass through from ten to fifteen rooms to get to their own apartment. All this, together with the wildness of the site, the high river-banks, which so cover this castle of the Incas, that from the level of the desert one is not aware of its existence—forms a remarkable spectacle. An old negro, who has lived down by the river for upwards of forty years, told me I was the first white man who had been there in that time. The inhabitants must have died of hunger, for we literally stand and walk on skulls and bones. Every hole and corner is full of them. I was unable to find out the meaning of the word Lasana. The language of this district is now unknown.

I got acquainted with a Bolivian officer, who, at the command of his government, had undertaken the journey to the frontier of Paraguay. His accounts are very delightful, and he showed me various medicinal plants, as yet unknown, of which I will send you some by and by. An insect which in Bolivia is found in great quantities, and which *instantly* raises a blister on the skin like boiling water, is used by the natives as a remedy for sore throat; and a plant which causes much pain is excellent for scrofula and rheumatism. It is called jarilla (charija), and deserves to be used. From this letter it will be seen that a stay in this desert alone could furnish matter for researches and observations for a whole year.

I will only add, that through the very middle of the desert a mountain-chain stretches itself, consisting of naked rocks, of which I send some fragments. Everywhere around we see the broad and deep beds of rivers, one of which falls 3000 feet in the space of four leagues. The granite to the right and to the left is polished like marble. Everywhere are traces of the gigantic effects of water, but nowhere any water, neither any historical accounts of rain.

And now enough of Atacama. May what I have sent arrive safely at its destination, and help to complete the picture which the pen of a passing wanderer is too weak to give!

The sensation produced by the sight of these mummies is very different from that experienced when viewing those Egyptian ones which we have hitherto been accustomed to see. In the latter, the recumbent posture takes from the corpse all that might connect it in our minds with the functions of the living body. Like our own dead, it lies stretched out at its full length, the hands generally crossed over the breast, nor does the countenance retain much of a life-like expression; but in the former the attitude reminds us at once of the time

when the warm blood still circulated through the now dry body, while the face has still its distinct features, and in one instance especially, the expression of intense suffering. They do not seem so far removed from our own present state as the embalmed mummy of Egypt: by that expression of human suffering, and by their erect position, there still seems some link between us and them. Hence perhaps our painful sympathy: while, as we gaze on the shrunken form that hath lain thousands of years within the Pyramids, and is at last unswathed before our scrutinising eyes, we feel, 'between us and thee there is no connecting link; we live, and thy realm is death.' And it is just because these mummies of Peru do not remind us of death that they produce on us the impression which they do. There they sit before us, inanimate and immovable, yet associated by this attitude and aspect with all the phenomena of life.

The two mummies at present in the museum at Ratisbon—of which one is the body of a man, the other of a female—may thus be described:—The knees are drawn up close to the body, the arms are pressed against the ribs, and in each instance the right arm falls between the bent knees to the ground. The body of the man is of a reddish copper colour, approaching to brown; that of the woman of a dirty brownish yellow. The nails of the fingers and toes are perfectly preserved, even the hair of both still remains, and that of the female is prettily braided, and at the end fastened with a knot. The eyelids, too, are in a good state of preservation. The heads of both are bent backwards, as if death had overtaken them in their present posture, and as if, too, they had had to combat with exhaustion. The mouth of the woman is open, giving to the whole face an expression which makes it painful to dwell upon: one turns away from it as soon as possible, and is glad to do so. Suffering, terrible suffering, is depicted on that countenance, and the last convulsive efforts of nature are distinctly visible.

Dr Ried, the traveller from whose letters the extracts above quoted have been taken, is by birth a Scotchman. While still young, he was sent to the Scotch monastery at Ratisbon to receive his education, and since, twenty years, has traversed the world in all directions, meeting with the strangest adventures, and adding greatly to our knowledge of the country and the people of the interior of South America. His present journey was undertaken in the character of inspector-general of the military hospitals in the free state of Bolivia; and it was while proceeding thither that these letters, dated from Lasana, were written.

FATE OF THE RED MEN.

It appears that, by recent annexations, about 124,000 Indians have been brought under the control of the government; and these are so fierce in their disposition, and warlike in their habits, as to be the terror of the settlers in and around the district of Texas. They are well mounted and armed; they steal and murder without remorse, and utterly disregard any infancy that may be sent against them. The American war secretary recommends the employment of light cavalry, which, 'by pursuing them to their homes, and retaliating severely upon them,' will soon teach them 'to respect the property of the whites.' The expense of conveying provisions to military posts in these districts is enormous: to some it amounts to nearly £10 for a barrel of pork, and £6, 10s. for a barrel of flour. Again, in Florida, old though that state is, the Indians, not numbering more than a hundred men, are a source of terror and annoyance to the whites; and it is reported that 'so long as they remain in the state, collisions will continually occur, and will only end with the extinction of the race.' Efforts are to be made to induce the Indians to emigrate, and join the rest of their nation further west, or 'to abandon their wandering life—to live in villages, and resort to agricultural

pursuits.' In another report it is recommended that the Red Men should be concentrated in one district, where they would be under the direct control of the federal government—prevented from warring on each other, and forced to learn for themselves the arts of civilised life—an excellent proposition truly, and all the more excellent from its advocacy in this country by an intelligent Indian chief, who has assumed the name of George Copway. But the poor Indians seem to be a doomed race, and while here and there one or two may give up their nomadic habits, and turn civilised and industrious, the great mass seem utterly unable to subdue those propensities that, there is too good reason to believe, will ultimately exterminate them. In the report of the war secretary there is the following melancholy passage:—'Information has been communicated to this department that, through the instrumentality and persuasion of the governor of Minnesota and our agent stationed among them, the Chippewa tribe of Indians had been prevailed upon to make a treaty of peace with the Sioux, with whom they were at war, and who had been the aggressors; that shortly after the treaty was concluded, it was broken by the Sioux, who made an unprovoked attack on the Chippewas. As the treaty had been made at the earnest solicitation and almost command of the governor and the agent, and the most solemn assurances had been given by them both to the Chippewas that if it was violated the United States would interfere to protect them and redress their wrongs, the department has been invoked to make good these pledges. It is highly important that these people should respect the authority and confide in the promises of the agents of the government. It is deemed advisable, therefore, that a small force be sent against the Sioux. No doubt is entertained that the mere appearance of this force among them will suffice to intimidate them, and prevent what might otherwise be a protracted and sanguinary war.'

NEW MATERIAL FOR PAPER.

M. Adolphe Roque, who has bestowed many years of patient investigation on the improvement of the manufacture of paper, has at length, we are informed, succeeded in adapting to that purpose the fibres of certain filaceous plants, especially the banana and the aloe, whereby the present costly, laborious, wasteful, and patchy 'rag' process may be superseded by a raw material, easily procurable in large quantities, and safely and economically worked into a clear, strong, and durable texture.—*Literary Gazette*.—(With an excise duty of fourteen guineas per ton on the manufactured article, any attempt to make paper from the above material would in all likelihood prove as futile as has been the attempt to make paper from straw. So long as the duty lasts, an extension of paper-making by new and precarious operations is hopeless.)

THE PTARMIGAN IN NORWAY.

The bird which gave me the greatest sport in Norway, and which I most frequently sought for the sake of food, was the ptarmigan, called by the Norwegians 'rype.' I have generally found them concealed among the gray lichen-covered rocks on the summits of the fjelds, and so closely do they resemble these rocks in colour, that I could scarcely ever see them on the ground; and sometimes when the more practised eyes of my guide would find them, and he would point out the exact spot, it was not until after a long scrutiny that I could distinguish the bird within a dozen yards of me. Frequently we could find them on the snow itself, and many a time has a large circular depression in the snow been pointed out to me where the ptarmigan had been lying and pluming himself in his chilly bed. He is a noble bird, as free as air, and for the most part uninterrupted in his wide domain: he can range over the enormous tracts of feld, seldom roused by a human step, and still more seldom hunted by man. When the winter clothes his dwelling in a garb of snow, he too arrays himself in the purest and most beautiful white; when the summer sun melts down the snow, and gray rocks appear, he too

puts on his coloured dress, and assimilates himself once more to his beloved rocks.—*Rev. W. Smith in Zoologist*.

THE ROAD ROUND BY KENNEDY'S MILL.

[From a volume of 'Poems, by Allan Park Paton' (Saunders and Otley, London), distinguished by fancy and feeling.]

THE steam-carriage now rushes angrily o'er
The fields where in youth's golden years I have
ranged;
The streams where I tracked my flag-boats are no more,
And the dells where I lay reading ballads are changed;
But a few of the haunts of my boyhood can show
Those features so dear in the past, to me still,
And one of the few, where I yet love to go
Of an eve, is the road round by Kennedy's Mill—
The quiet little road round by Kennedy's Mill.

When closed for the day, with a smile, were our tomes,
And we rushed with a shout from the pedagogue's
frown,
When the last game was o'er, and my friends sought
their homes,
Which lay in the smoke and the dust of the town—
And a blithe little scholar, my bag on my back,
Alone I set out unto mine on the hill,
Be it early or late, be the sky bright or black,
My route was the road round by Kennedy's Mill—
The sweet winding road round by Kennedy's Mill.

Then, to gather the wild-flowers that studded its breast,
I'd slip down the glen-side so thorny and steep,
Or climb some old ivy-clad tree to its nest,
And have of the smooth oval treasures a peep;
Or I'd wade up the stream, and beneath the large stones
I'd feel for the sly little trout with a thrill!
Oh! what were the pleasures of kings on their thrones
To mine as I strayed round by Kennedy's Mill—
The silent green road round by Kennedy's Mill!

If the grasshopper chirped from the bank as I passed,
I'd gently glide over, and hope, by my ear,
To find that mysterious being at last,
That ne'er could be seen, and yet ever was near;
Or if the lark soared up to heaven's bright gate,
I'd sit down and hear out his carolling shrill;
What cared I for dinners or scolds that might wait,
As I listened his song round by Kennedy's Mill—
By the branch-shaded road round by Kennedy's
Mill!

The cot by the way, on whose front roses smiled,
And the tall mill itself, with its slow-going wheel,
Its high open doors where the white bags were piled,
And its many small windows bedusted with meal;
Its dog, its gay poultry, its lamb tied above,
Near the green lane behind that led on to the hill—
Ah! these were the sights that I warmly did love,
As I strolled on the road round by Kennedy's Mill—
The quick-turning road round by Kennedy's Mill.

And so was it dear unto me when a boy
All thoughtless of change, and of death and of care,
And therefore my heart will throb quicker with joy
In these days, when I wander and look round me there.
But often dark clouds will my bright spirit cover,
And feelings the saddest my bosom will fill,
When I think on the loved voice, now silent for ever,
That said, 'Let us walk round by Kennedy's Mill—
The sweet, retired road round by Kennedy's Mill!'

Erratum.—In No. 371, at page 89, an error in figures has occurred.
For 400,000,000, read 80,000,000.

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